



Woolley Wood School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107180
LEA Sheffield
Inspection number 277726
Inspection dates 15 May 2006 to 16 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Rosemary Eaton CfBT Lead Inspector

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Special	School address	Oaks Fold Road
School category	Community special		Sheffield
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		South Yorkshire S5 0TG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0114 245 6885
Number on roll	59	Fax number	0114 257 0269
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs M Hartley
Date of previous inspection	25 September 2000	Headteacher	Ms M Holly

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3 to 11	15 May 2006 - 16 May 2006	277726

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Currently, around two thirds of the school's pupils have profound and multiple learning difficulties and the remainder have severe learning difficulties. Many of the pupils have serious medical conditions and a very small minority have autism, sensory impairments or behaviour that challenges. Far more pupils than average are from minority ethnic groups, with one quarter being of Pakistani heritage. A similar proportion is in the early stages of learning English. Very few pupils are refugees, asylum seekers or are in public care. The school has Investors in People status and has achieved the local Healthy Schools Standard. It is within an Education in Cities Action Zone. In 2009, the school is to move to a new site and incorporate provision for pupils with physical disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with outstanding features. The inspection confirms the school's judgements about all aspects of its work. Pupils make good progress and achieve well, in line with the quality of teaching. They are taught to communicate in ways that suit them best and this has a huge impact on their ability to learn. Occasionally, activities are too hard or too easy for particular pupils, and this slows down their progress. The school provides well for children in the Foundation Stage and they achieve well. Personal development is outstanding because pupils' well-being is promoted so effectively. They grow into happy, confident and sociable children. A good curriculum is provided, adapted carefully to suit the full range of pupils' learning difficulties and/or disabilities. All pupils are looked after extremely well, supported by the school's excellent partnerships and collaborative working, for instance, with Health Trust staff. A strong feature of its good leadership and management is the systematic way the headteacher collects evidence about the school's performance, using this fully to plan future developments. However, teachers do not have enough opportunities to find out for themselves about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement; for example, in the subjects they lead. Woolley Wood provides good value for money, has moved on well since the previous inspection, and has a good capacity to continue to improve and embrace the changes that lie ahead.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that each lesson challenges every pupil to achieve as much as they can.
- Provide more opportunities for teachers to take responsibility for checking and improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Owing to pupils' learning difficulties and/or disabilities, standards on entry and throughout the school are very much lower than those found in mainstream schools. However, pupils make good progress and achieve well. Teachers set challenging targets for them to achieve, and these are frequently met. In the Foundation Stage, fastest progress is made in the area of personal, social and emotional development as a result of excellent relationships with staff and a supportive learning environment. Consequently, children become confident to try new experiences and they learn well across the board. During Years 1 to 6, pupils build strongly on these early successes, for instance, in reading and mathematics. Until recently, achievement in writing skills lagged behind that in other aspects of English, but efforts by the whole school have boosted pupils' skills effectively. Many find learning to communicate particularly difficult. Alternative systems, such as signing or exchanging pictures, lead to notable progress in pupils' ability to make themselves understood, helping them to learn in other subjects. Pupils from minority ethnic groups often make particularly good progress. Boys and girls with profound and multiple learning difficulties learn much

more slowly than those with severe learning difficulties. However, when their particular problems are taken into account, their achievement is equally good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Assemblies make very good contributions to spiritual development; for instance, providing opportunities for pupils to experience an atmosphere of stillness and quiet. Events such as an Eid party or harvest festival are very effective in raising their awareness of different cultures. Pupils' enjoyment of school is very evident from their smiles, waves and 'Hello's' as they come in each morning. They say that they particularly like games, dancing, swimming and playtimes. Behaviour is good, especially since a number of pupils find it hard to conform. They often make very good progress in learning to consider others, share and take turns. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils are eager to take responsibility; for instance, collecting milk for their class. The newly established school council is providing more formal opportunities for them to contribute to the school community, for example, by choosing party food. Pupils learn about healthy eating and exercise is strongly encouraged, ranging from physiotherapy to athletics. They find out about ways of staying safe, including how to ask for help. In addition to learning key skills such as communication, pupils develop positive attitudes which serve them well. Determination was written all over the face of a Year 1 boy with complex difficulties, as he held a stick and made marks in the sand.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Systems to gather information about how well pupils are learning are thorough and enable teachers to be very aware of the needs of each one. Their individual learning difficulties and/or disabilities are usually catered for well, through accurately matched activities. For example, in an English lesson, pupils in Years 2 and 3 with profound and multiple learning difficulties used all their senses to investigate fruit, communicating their preferences by methods such as eye-pointing. Others, with less complex needs, chose symbols correctly to complete sentences, which they read. A minority of lessons do not allow every pupil to learn as well as they can, because particular tasks are either too difficult or not demanding enough. A significant strength of teaching is the consistent way in which pupils are encouraged to communicate, often using a combination of methods, such as speech and signing. Teaching assistants play a full role in helping pupils to learn. Like the teachers, they allow sufficient time for pupils to make responses. This often pays dividends, as when a child in the Foundation Stage said 'bye bye' for the first time.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school offers a good quality curriculum, which meets statutory requirements. It has a clear and suitable focus on English, mathematics, physical education and personal, social and health education. Modifications are made to suit pupils' learning difficulties and/or disabilities, with one parent praising staff's inventiveness. The curriculum has recently been restructured in order to help pupils make links between their learning in different subjects. This work is ongoing in Years 3 to 6, where teachers are still checking that the programme of work allows pupils to build systematically on what they have already learned. In the Foundation Stage, plenty of play is organised, often making effective use of the outdoor environment. Pupils have good opportunities for visits linked to their work in class. Throughout the school, visiting artists are involved in creative projects that enhance the curriculum significantly. Lunchtimes are enjoyable and productive with varied games and activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

This aspect is outstanding, because every pupil is known as an individual. Staff, including therapists and visiting professionals, work as a team to support their needs extremely effectively, regardless of their complexity. The school nurse provides expert care and trains classroom staff, for instance, to care for pupils who need specialised help at mealtimes. Child protection and health and safety arrangements are in place: incidents are recorded and pupils' behaviour is well managed. Pupils whose first language is not English have access to specialist support which also enhances links with parents, by offering interpretation or translation if necessary. There are sensitive arrangements to support children as they join the Foundation Stage, and Year 6 pupils are carefully prepared to move on to secondary school. Pupils trust the staff and know who to turn to if they need help or are unwell.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall, with senior staff working closely together to provide very good leadership. The headteacher demonstrates a clear commitment to continuing to provide as well as possible for all pupils on the current site, whilst taking full account of the changes ahead. Well organised systems provide accurate information about how well each aspect of the school is performing. For example, senior staff make regular checks on the quality of teaching and the headteacher's analysis of assessment information is rigorous. Areas in need of further development are identified and incorporated into the school's development plan, with well structured action plans for each element. This thorough and reflective planning has led to good improvement since the previous inspection. Currently, not all subjects have leaders identified and most teachers are not yet sufficiently involved in finding out how effectively pupils are taught. An extremely wide range of productive links with other

schools, professionals and organisations extends the curriculum and the care provided and enhances pupils' learning and personal development. This excellent collaborative working is reflected in the team spirit amongst staff, a significant factor in the school's good capacity to improve. A new teacher spoke appreciatively of the 'network of support' she is experiencing. Governors tailor their individual responsibilities to the school's priorities, playing an active role in finding out how well pupils are being served. Parents are consistently invited to be partners in their children's learning. Their views are sought and always taken seriously. In turn, parents hold the school in very high regard, one writing that she 'will never be able to thank it enough'.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we visited your school. We really enjoyed our short time with you. We would like to tell you about what we thought.

What we liked best about your school:

- you all try as hard as you can in lessons and you learn a lot
- all of the adults in school work together to make sure you are safe and happy
- the teachers find lots of interesting ways to help you learn
- you have lots of fun and enjoy coming to school
- your headteacher sees to it that the school keeps getting better.

What we have asked the school to do now:

- make sure you all have work that is not too hard or too easy
- involve all your teachers in checking you are all learning as well as you can.